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T.S. COMINT

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MEMORANDUM FOR: THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

1. In response to your memorandum of 30 July, my views and recommendations on the "Brownell" report are set forth below.
2. Basically, I find that I am in disagreement with the major conclusion of the report - that strong centralization of the national COMINT effort is desirable.
3. Strong versus loose centralized control is a constant question in handling management problems. I believe that the COMINT field is particularly vulnerable to danger from either extreme. I feel that COMINT requires a very delicate balance between these extremes, and I believe we have made valuable progress toward evolution of this balance. If the specific recommendations of the Committee are accepted, I believe we will be taking a backward instead of a forward step. I agree that the present organization has not yet found the final balance, but the present situation in which COMINT activities are guided rather than controlled, with all interested parties participating in that guidance, is, in my opinion, evidence of sound evolutionary progress that should be fostered.
4. I agree with the report's conclusion that COMINT is a national responsibility. However, I do not consider that the Committee's findings reflect the full implications of the military importance of COMINT in wartime. Acceptance of the Brownell Committee's recommendations would remove from Service control the field units now operating in direct support of field forces and place them under the strong control of a new mechanism of command. This is of particular concern to the Air Force where time and speed factors require immediate response by field intercept units. I believe it would impair established lines of command in defense channels, and could create dangerous obstacles requiring hasty revisions in the event of hostilities.
5. In view of the fact that the Brownell Committee did not make specific recommendations on the detailed organization of AFSA, I recommend that consideration be given to its organization and operation as a unified command under the Joint Chiefs, following established practices for "joint action of Armed Forces". This is a form of centralized control that is not extreme. We are acquainted with

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it and know how to adjust it. I believe it would provide for effective wartime as well as peacetime operation; would avoid the problem of using new and unusual machinery for the control of military forces; and would, I believe, be adequately responsive to civilian as well as military interests.

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M. F. TWINING
Acting Chief of Staff
United States Air Force

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